

## The Wartime Origins of Democratization

Why do some countries emerge from civil war more democratic than when they entered into it, while others remain staunchly autocratic? Observers widely depict internal conflict as a pathway to autocracy or state failure, but in fact there is variation in post-civil war regimes. Conventional accounts focus on war outcomes and international peacebuilding, but Huang suggests that postwar regimes have wartime origins, notably in how rebel groups interact with ordinary people as part of war-making. War can have mobilizing effects when rebels engage extensively with civilian populations, catalyzing a bottom-up force for change toward greater political rights. Politics after civil war does not emerge from a blank slate, but reflects the war's institutional and social legacies. *The Wartime Origins of Democratization* explores these ideas through an original dataset of rebel governance and rigorous comparative case analysis. The findings have far-reaching implications for understanding wartime political orders, statebuilding, and international peacebuilding.

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# The Wartime Origins of Democratization

*Civil War, Rebel Governance,  
and Political Regimes*

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Reyko Huang

*Texas A&M University*



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## Acronyms

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ANC	African National Congress (South Africa)
ARENA	Alianza Republicana Nacionalista (Nationalist Republican Alliance) (El Salvador)
CPN-M	Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist
DP	Democratic Party (Uganda)
EPLF	Eritrean People's Liberation Front
ERA	Eritrean Relief Association
FMLN	Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front) (El Salvador)
Frelimo	Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (Liberation Front of Mozambique)
FROLINAT	Front de Libération Nationale du Tchad (National Liberation Front of Chad)
GAM	Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (Free Aceh Movement) (Indonesia)
GDP	Gross domestic product
GNR	Government of National Reconciliation (Tajikistan)
ICG	International Crisis Group
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INGO	International non-governmental organization
IRP	Islamic Renaissance Party (Tajikistan)
LPRP	Lao People's Revolutionary Party
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (Sri Lanka)
MDJT	Mouvement pour la Démocratie et la Justice au Tchad (Movement for Democracy and Justice in Chad)
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NLF	National Liberation Front (Vietnam)
NPFL	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
NRA	National Resistance Army (Uganda)
NRC	National Resistance Committee (Uganda)



## List of Acronyms

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NRM	National Resistance Movement (Uganda)
NSA	Non-State Actors Dataset
OLS	Ordinary least squares
ONUMOZ	United Nations Operation in Mozambique
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PCJSS	Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samit (United People's Party of the Chittagong Hill Tracts) (Bangladesh)
PFT	People's Front of Tajikistan
PKK	Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê (Kurdistan Workers' Party) (Turkey)
PSP	Progressive Socialist Party (Lebanon)
RC	Resistance Council (Uganda)
RCD	Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie (Congolese Rally for Democracy)
RGD	Rebel Governance Dataset
Renamo	Resistência Nacional Moçambicana (Mozambican National Resistance)
RPF	Rwandan Patriotic Front
RUF	Revolutionary United Front (Sierra Leone)
SADR	Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (Western Sahara)
SIP	Scalar Index of Politics
SPA	Seven Party Alliance (Nepal)
SWAPO	South West Africa People's Organization (Namibia)
TPLF	Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (Ethiopia)
UML	Communist Party of Nepal-United Marxist-Leninist
UN	United Nations
UNITA	União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola)
UNMIN	United Nations Mission in Nepal
UNMOT	United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan
UNTOP	United Nations Tajikistan Office of Peace-Building
UTO	United Tajik Opposition
ZANU	Zimbabwe African National Union

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